THE WORCESTER LAD FONDLY REMEMBERS HELEN KELLER ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF HER BIRTH JUNE 27, 1980

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ON SEPTEMBER 29, 1954, DR. PETER J. SALMON, "THE WORCESTER LAD", ACCOMPANIED HELEN KELLER TO BURRWOOD, A HOME FOR THE AGED BLIND AND DEAF-BLIND OPERATED BY THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND, ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE HELEN KELLER GARDEN, A PLACE OF "SERENITY AND GRACIOUSNESS" REFLECTING THE LIFESTYLE OF ITS NAMESAKE. BURRWOOD IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE GRAND SHOWPLACE ESTATES LOCATED IN COLD SPRING HARBOR, LONG ISLAND. AT THE TIME OF THE DEDICATION, DR. SALMON WAS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND.

C.3

THE WORCESTER LAD REMEMBERS HELEN KELLER

MANY YEARS AGO, THERE LIVED A LAD IN WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, WHO WAS A MEMBER OF A FAMILY OF THREE BOYS AND THREE GIRLS WHO WERE DESCRIBED AS CHILDREN OF "POOR IRISH IMMIGRANTS". THERE WAS MUCH LOVE FROM THESE CHILDREN'S PARENTS, BUT FOOD WAS OFTEN SCARCE. THE FAMILY, NEVERTHELESS, TOOK ADVERSITY IN STRIDE. THIS LAD HAD WHITE HAIR, VERY LIGHT BLUE EYES, AND A PROBLEM WITH HIS SIGHT. IN DUE COURSE, HE ATTENDED PUBLIC SCHOOL, WHERE HE LASTED A DAY OR TWO AND THEN WAS REFERRED TO A SCHOOL FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN. OF COURSE HE WAS TERMED "RETARDED". THE FIRST DAY AT THIS SCHOOL, HE DID JUST ABOUT WHAT EVERY OTHER KID DID IN A SLOYD (CARPENTRY) CLASS; HE CUT HIS FINGER SLIGHTLY, AND IT BLED. THE FORE-RUNNER OF A SOCIAL WORKER (A KIND DO-GOODER) MAGNIFIED THE EYE DIFFICULTY SO THAT HE WAS ACCEPTED AS A PUPIL IN THE PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND, THEN LO-CATED IN SOUTH BOSTON. HE HAS OFTEN SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE UNDERSTANDING, KINDNESS, AND EDUCATION THAT HE RECEIVED, PERKINS WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST BENE-FITS IN HIS LIFE. IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE HE HEARD THE MAGIC WORDS "HELEN KELLER" AND "ANNE SULLIVAN" , ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT MEET THEM THERE. ANNE, OF COURSE, WAS HELEN KELLER'S BELOVED TEACHER AND LIFELONG FRIEND. SHE, TOO, WAS A CHILD OF TRAGEDY.

THERE WERE A FEW DEAF-BLIND STUDENTS AT PERKINS, AND THIS YOUNG LAD WAS GREATLY INTERESTED IN THEM, HELPING WHEREVER HE COULD. HE LEARNED THE MANUAL ALPHABET, ONE OF THE METHODS OF COMMUNICATION BY DEAF-BLIND PERSONS, WHICH THE STUDENTS PRACTICED AT THE DINNER TABLE TO SEE WHO COULD DO IT THE FASTEST. AF-TER GRADUATING FROM PERKINS, HE TOOK A TWO YEAR POST-GRADUATE COURSE THERE TO STUDY THE NEEDS OF THE DEAF-BLIND, WHICH HE FOUND MOST USEFUL WHEN HE ACCEPTED THE POSITION IN 1917 WITH THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND (IHB). HERE HE MET SOME NEEDY DEAF-BLIND PERSONS, AND HIS PERKINS' BACKGROUND MADE HIM THE KEY

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PERSON IN DEALING WITH THEIR PROBLEMS.

LATER HE MET HELEN KELLER AND ANNE SULLIVAN MACY AT THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND (AFB) ON THE OCCASION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMITTEE FOR THE DEAF-BLIND, WHICH WAS CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH SERVICES FOR DEAF-BLIND CHILDREN. HELEN KELLER, OF COURSE, WAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN, WITH THE WORCESTER LAD AS A MEMBER. IT WAS A GREAT CHALLENGE.

ON HELEN KELLER'S 65TH BIRTHDAY, SHE FORMALIZED THE SERVICES FOR THE DEAF-BLIND AS A DEPARTMENT AT IHB.

DURING WORLD WAR II, IN A UNIQUE CEREMONY AT THE BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC, IHB RECEIVED AN AWARD OF THE "ARMY-NAVY E" WITH FOUR STARS, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT AND HIGHEST HONOR BESTOWED FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT. THIS WAS MADE MORE MEMORABLE BY THE PRESENCE OF HELEN KELLER AND HER DEAR FRIEND, POLLY THOMSON; FLOYD GIBBONS, NOTED WAR CORRESPONDENT; AND SEVERAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES, INCLUDING A REAR ADMIRAL AND A GENERAL. AFTER THE CEREMONY WAS OVER, THE GUESTS WENT ACROSS THE STREET TO THE THEN PROMINENT GRENADA HOTEL, WHERE THEY VIED WITH EACH OTHER IN TELLING ANECDOTES, TO WHICH HELEN KELLER REPLIED IN KIND, UNTIL ABOUT TWO-THIRTY IN THE MORNING.

ANOTHER OUTSTANDING OCCASION WAS ON HELEN KELLER'S 80TH BIRTHDAY, WHEN SHE WAS THE HONORED GUEST AT A LUNCHEON OF THE IHB CLUB, ATTENDED BY EIGHTY DEAF-BLIND PEOPLE AND OTHERS. PERHAPS THE MOST MEMORABLE INCIDENT WAS HER INSISTENCE, AGAINST THE ADVICE OF HER NURSE, WHO ACCOMPANIED HER, TO PERSONALLY SPEAK TO EVERY ONE OF THE DEAF-BLIND PERSONS.

IN 1966 THE WORCESTER LAD COMPLETED HIS WORK AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF IHB, AND WAS NAMED ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT BY THE IHB BOARD OF TRUSTEES. JUST PRIOR TO THIS, AT THE AGE OF 71, HE COOPERATED WITH MARY E. SWITZER, A HIGH RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, IN DEVELOPING LEGISLATION WHICH RESULTED IN THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTHS AND ADULTS. PRESIDENT JOHNSON SIGNED THE BILL INTO LAW ON OCTOBER 3, 1967, AND ON JUNE 24, 1969, IHB WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (DHEW) TO OPERATE THE CENTER. THROUGH A FORTUNATE CONTACT WITH ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, THE WORCESTER LAD HEARD OF A VALUABLE PIECE OF U.S. GOVERNMENT SURPLUS PROPERTY AT SANDS POINT, LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK. ON FEBRUARY 22, 1971 TWENTY-FIVE ACRES OF THIS PROPERTY WERE CONVEYED TO IHB BY DHEW. ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM CONGRESS TO CONSTRUCT BUILDINGS ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR THE TRAINING AND USE OF DEAF-BLIND PERSONS. LATER, BY CONGRESSIONAL ACT, THE NAME OF THE CENTER WAS CHANGED TO THE "HELEN KELLER NATIONAL CENTER FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTHS AND ADULTS". ALTHOUGH HELEN KELLER DID

NOT LIVE TO SEE IT, SHE KNEW HER DREAM FOR A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR DEAF-BLIND PERSONS WOULD BE FULFILLED.

DURING HIS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH HELEN KELLER, THE WORCESTER LAD WAS INSPIRED BY HER GREAT KNOWLEDGE AND HER DEDICATION TO THE CAUSE OF BLIND AND DEAF-BLIND PERSONS. SHE TRAVELED THROUGHOUT MANY COUNTRIES AS AN AMBASSADOR OF GOOD WILL ON THEIR BEHALF. SHE USUALLY WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ANNE SULLIVAN MACY, AND AFTER HER DEATH, BY POLLY THOMSON, WHO WAS ALSO HER DEVOTED FRIEND AND ASSOCIATE FOR MANY YEARS.

IN APRIL 1966, IHB AND PERKINS SCHOOL CELEBRATED THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ANNE SULLIVAN MACY WITH CEREMONIES IN BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND WASHINGTON, D.C. IN WASHINGTON, THE OUTSTANDING OCCASION WAS HELD IN THE WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL. THE ENTIRE PERKINS' CHOIR, IN THEIR ATTRACTIVE ROBES, SANG BEAUTIFULLY. MARY E. SWITZER GAVE THE EULOGY, AND EIGHT DEAF-BLIND PERSONS WERE AWARDED THE ANNE SULLIVAN GOLD MEDAL SPONSORED BY IHB AND PERKINS. DURING THIS CENTENNIAL YEAR A FEATURE FILM ENTITLED "THE LEGACY OF ANNE SULLIVAN", OUTLINING THE WORK BEING DONE IN EDUCATING AND REHABILITATING DEAF-BLIND INDIVIDUALS, RECEIVED WIDE CIRCULATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD. IN ADDITION, A MOST KIND AND GENEROUS LADY EXTENDED HER FINANCIAL BENEVOLENCE TO A NUMBER OF AGENCIES FOR THE BLIND, INCLUDING THE IHB. THE WORCESTER LAD DOES NOT WISH TO IDENTIFY THIS GREAT LADY, BUT THE MANY AGENCIES WHICH HAVE BEEN THE BENEFICIARIES OF HER GENEROSITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT SHE HAS DONE.

AS THIS IS BEING WRITTEN, GREAT PLANS ARE BEING COMPLETED FOR THE HELEN KELLER CENTENNIAL CONGRESS CELEBRATION, BEGINNING JUNE 23, 1980 IN BOSTON, WHERE SOME TWENTY-FIVE AGENCIES WILL BE SCHEDULING THEIR MEETINGS. THIS WILL BE BY FAR THE LARGEST GATHERING OF MEETINGS EVER HELD BY AGENCIES FOR THE BLIND, THE DEAF-BLIND, AND ASSOCIATED AGENCIES. THE AFB IS COORDINATING A SERIES OF EVENTS AND SPONSORING THE PUBLICATION OF A BOOK ON THE LIFE OF HELEN KELLER, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE PUBLISHED IN TIME FOR THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION. A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP WILL BE ISSUED BY THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE IN HONOR OF HELEN KELLER AND WILL BE PRESENTED WITH A SPECIAL CEREMONY AT TUSCUMBIA, ALABAMA, HER BIRTHPLACE.

AN AGENCY IN WHICH HELEN KELLER HAD BEEN VITALLY INTERESTED OVER THE YEARS IS THE HELEN KELLER INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED (HKI), WHICH EMPHASIZES PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS, ESPECIALLY IN INFANTS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND OFFERS OTHER NEEDED SERVICES. THE HKI HAS EXTENSIVE PLANS FOR THE RECOGNITION OF THE HELEN KELLER CENTENNIAL. THESE INCLUDE A TWENTY-SEVEN MINUTE FILM DEPICTING SOME OF THE OVERSEAS WORK OF THE AGENCY. HKI HAS BECOME A VITAL FORCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. THE WORCESTER LAD IS A LONG-TIME TRUSTEE OF THIS AGENCY AND THAT

OF THE AFB.

FOLLOWING IN HELEN KELLER'S FOOTSTEPS, THE WORCESTER LAD, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE, LILYAN, MADE A THREE-MONTHS SURVEY OF WORK FOR THE DEAF-BLIND IN 1963. THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY IHB AND THE PFIZER CORP., THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE LATE MR. JOHN E. MCKEEN, PRESIDENT OF PFIZER AND A TRUSTEE OF IHB. THE WORCESTER LAD VISITED TWELVE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING EIGHTEEN CITIES, AND ACQUIRED FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE OF THE LIMITED WORK THAT WAS BEING DONE BY MOST OF THESE COUNTRIES. MOST OF THEIR SERVICES INVOLVED LIMITED SCHOOLING, RECREATION, AND THE DAY-BY-DAY NEEDS OF DEAF-BLIND PERSONS. HE WAS GREATLY IMPRESSED WITH THEIR DEVOTION AND CONCERN FOR DEAF-BLIND CHILDREN AND ADULTS. HE RETURNED WITH INCREASED ZEAL TO DO SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL FOR THE DEAF-BLIND IN THE UNITED STATES.

FROM 1949 TO 1969 THE WORCESTER LAD SERVED AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON SERVICES FOR THE DEAF-BLIND, OF THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND. HE MADE ANOTHER PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF WORK FOR THE DEAF-BLIND IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE FACT THAT SO MANY OF THEM WHO RESPONDED REFERRED TO THE DEAF AND THE BLIND, RATHER THAN THE DEAF-BLIND.

ANOTHER MEMORABLE OCCASION AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON SERVICES FOR THE DEAF-BLIND WAS A VISIT TO HIS HOLINESS, POPE PAUL VI. THERE WERE EIGHTY PERSONS FROM TWENTY COUNTRIES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE. HIS HOLINESS EXPRESSED HIS GREAT CONCERN FOR THE DEAF-BLIND AND PROMISED TO REMEMBER THEM SPECIFICALLY IN HIS PRAYERS.

A SIGNIFICANT PROJECT, FUNDED BY HEW, WAS THE PUBLICATION OF A SERIES OF SEVEN VOLUMES ON THE REHABILITATION OF DEAF-BLIND PERSONS, AND A SEPARATE EIGHTH VOLUME, ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICES FOR THE DEAF-BLIND. THIS WAS THE FIRST SUCH COMPREHENSIVE PUBLISHED WORK ON THE ADULT DEAF-BLIND, AND REMAINS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD.

ON COMPLETION OF HIS SERVICES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, HE RECOMMENDED THAT A WORLD CONGRESS FOR THE DEAF-BLIND BE HELD. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE FIRST HISTORIC HELEN KELLER WORLD CONFERENCE ON SERVICES TO DEAF-BLIND YOUTHS AND ADULTS, WHICH WAS HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, FROM SEPTEMBER 11TH TO 16TH, 1977. A DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF DEAF-BLIND PERSONS WAS ADOPTED AT THIS CONFERENCE.

HELEN KELLER RECEIVED MANY AWARDS AND CITATIONS, AS WELL AS MANY TROPHIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. SHE WAS PRESENTED BY THE GRATEFUL PEOPLE OF JAPAN WITH THE ETERNAL LIGHT, WHICH STOOD FOR MANY YEARS AS A BEACON ON THE GROUNDS OF HER LOVELY SMALL ESTATE CALLED "ARCAN RIDGE". ANOTHER GIFT WAS A HANDSOME PORTRAIT, WHICH WAS REPRODUCED WITH THE CONSENT OF THE AFB AND IS PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED IN THE ENTRANCE HALL OF THE HKNC WITH THE INSCRIPTION: "HELEN KELLER 1880-1968

FROM A PAINTING BY ALEXANDER CLAYTON 1956". THE GOWN THAT SHE IS WEARING IS THE ONE THAT SHE WORE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW WHEN SHE RECEIVED AN HONORARY DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LAWS IN 1932.

THE MIGEL MEDAL AWARD IS ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS WHICH IS PRESENTED EACH YEAR BY THE AFB TO THOSE WHO QUALIFY AS OUTSTANDING LEADERS IN THE FIELD OF BLINDNESS AND DEAF-BLINDNESS. FOR MANY YEARS HELEN KELLER PRESENTED THESE AWARDS, WHICH ADDED GREATLY TO THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, AND THOSE WHO WERE INVITED WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND HEAR HER. THE WORCESTER LAD IS PROUD TO HAVE RECEIVED THIS AWARD.

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WORKERS FOR THE BLIND HAS A NUMBER OF AWARDS WHICH ARE PRESENTED TO DESERVING PERSONS, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OF WHICH IS THE AMBROSE M. SHOTWELL AWARD. THIS WAS PRESENTED TO HELEN KELLER AND THE WORCESTER LAD HAD THE GREAT HONOR OF MAKING THE PRESENTATION. THERE WAS A GREAT OUTPOURING OF WARMTH AND AFFECTION FOR HELEN KELLER AT THIS CEREMONY. LETTERS AND MESSAGES WERE RECEIVED FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. MANY OF THE WRITERS RECALLED HAVING HEARD OF HELEN KELLER AS CHILDREN OR AT SCHOOL AND CONSIDERED HER ONE OF THE MOST WONDERFUL HUMAN BEINGS.

PERHAPS THE MOST OUTSTANDING EVENT THAT HAPPENED IN THE LIFE OF THE WORCESTER LAD WAS THAT HELEN KELLER PROVIDED FOR A GRANT TO IHB IN HER WILL TO BE USED FOR DEAF-BLIND PERSONS. THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT FROM THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF HELEN KELLER, 1968 (ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN BRAILLE BY HER):

> "THIS DEVISE AND BEQUEST IS BEING MADE AS I LOOK UPON ITS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PETER J. SALMON, AS A MOST ACTIVE, DISINTERESTED CHAMPION OF THE DEAF BLIND. DESPITE HIS MANY DUTIES, HE HAS PUT UNREMITTING ENTHUSIASM, ENERGY AND RESOURCEFULNESS INTO THE EFFORT TO BREAK THEIR CAPTIVITY OF DOUBLE AFFLICTION AND TO GIVE THEM THEIR PLACE IN THE KINGDOM OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AND HAPPINESS."

THE WORCESTER LAD IS HUMBLED BY THIS TRIBUTE, AND HE KNOWS THAT WHATEVER HE WAS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH COULD NOT HAVE BEEN DONE WITHOUT THE HELP OF MANY OTHERS OVER THE YEARS.

THE WORCESTER LAD ALSO HAD CORRESPONDENCE WITH HELEN KELLER, AND HER BEAUTIFUL LETTERS ARE PRIZED BY HIM. AMONG THE MANY QUOTATIONS BY HER, THE ONE WHICH HE HAS TRIED TO LIVE UP TO, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HKNC, IS "WHILE THEY WERE SAYING AMONG THEMSELVES 'IT CAN NOT BE DONE' IT WAS DONE". HE VISITED HER AT HER LOVELY ESTATE IN WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT, WHERE SHE WAS SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE WHO HONORED HER, RESPECTED HER, AND LOVED HER. SHE HAD

NO FEAR OF DEATH, AND SHE DIED PEACEFULLY ON JUNE 1, 1968.

THE HELEN KELLER CENTENNIAL CONGRESS, HONORING THE LIFE AND WORK OF OUR BELOVED HELEN KELLER, SHOULD RESULT IN AN UPSURGE OF INTEREST AND ACTION FOR DEAF-BLIND PERSONS AROUND THE WORLD.

IT IS THE BELIEF OF THE WORCESTER LAD THAT HELEN KELLER DURING HER LIFETIME PROVIDED FAITH AND HOPE. THE CENTENNIAL CONGRESS WILL ENHANCE THE ACTION THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN, LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE FAITH AND HOPE, AND ZEAL OF HELEN KELLER.

THE HELEN KELLER NATIONAL CENTER FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTHS AND ADULTS HAS MADE COMMENDABLE STRIDES DURING ITS FIRST DECADE OF OPERATION IN OPENING UP MANY DOORS FOR DEAF-BLIND PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND AROUND THE WORLD. THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SERVICES OF THE CENTER AT SANDS POINT, WHICH IS RESERVED FOR THE MOST SERIOUSLY HANDICAPPED TRAINEES; BY THE EIGHT OUTREACH REGIONAL OFFICES STRATEGICALLY PLACED THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES; AND BY THE THIRTEEN COOPERATING REHABILITATION FACILITIES WHICH HAVE INSTITUTED PROGRAMS OF SERVICES TO DEAF-BLIND PERSONS IN VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

THOUSANDS OF DEAF-BLIND PERSONS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT OUT OF THE SITUATION OF IDLENESS, NEGLECT, AND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING TO LIVES OF USEFULNESS AND ACHIEVEMENT.

WITH THE HELP OF GOD, WE SHALL GO ON FROM HERE SO THAT DEAF-BLIND PERSONS WILL NEVER REVERT BACK TO THERE.

THE WORCESTER LAD
WHO HAS GROWN OLDER, WISER, AND NONRETARDED

Peter J. Salmon

PETER J. SALMON, LL.D.

Correspondence From Helen Keller

To The Worcester Lad,

Dr. Peter J. Salmon

ARCAN RIDGE
WESTPORT, CONN.

AUGUST 9, 1943

DEAR MR. SALMON,

WITH PROUD APPRECIATION I THANK YOU FOR THE COMPLIMENT OF YOUR REQUEST WHICH HAS DULY BEEN CONVEYED TO ME TO SPEAK AT THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND IN BROOKLYN. NOTHING WILL GIVE ME MORE PLEASURE THAN TO ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION.

FOR YEARS MY HEART HAS GLOWED WITH AFFECTIONATE INTEREST AS I HAVE WATCHED YOU FROM AFAR CARRYING ON HIGH, YET SO MODESTLY, THE PENNANT OF THE BLIND BATTLING AGAINST A SEA OF DIFFICULTIES. NOW THAT THE WAR HAS FORCED PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF THEIR CAPABILITIES, I DARE TO EXPECT TRIUMPHS OF WHICH I DID NOT DREAM IN THE MOVEMENTS OF EARLIER YEARS. NO LONGER MUST THE BLIND BE PENT UP WITHIN THE LIMITS OF MERE SOCIAL SERVICE. BESIDE THE URGE OF MANHOOD THEY HAVE SKILL IN THEIR HANDS AND POWER IN THEIR FEET TO CLIMB TO HEIGHTS WHERE THEY SHALL SHOULDER EVER WIDER RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACHIEVE A FULL SHARE IN NORMAL LIVING AND PRODUCTIVE CITIZENSHIP. OF COURSE THERE IS STILL A LONG, HARD TRAIL TO FOLLOW, BUT WITH THE GOAL ALREADY ENVISIONED, YOU AND THE BLIND WILL HAVE SAMSON'S STRENGTH TO SWEEP THE REMAINING OBSTACLES FROM YOUR PATH.

I WOULD LIKE TO SET THE DATE FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26TH. MISS THOMSON WILL

ACCOMPANY ME. ALSO I SHALL BE HAPPY IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE MESSAGE YOU WISH ME TO GIVE ON THAT OCCASION.

WITH CORDIAL GREETINGS AND BRIGHT ANTICIPATIONS, I AM,

SINCERELY YOURS,

Helen Keller

ARCAN RIDGE
WESTPORT, CONN.

DECEMBER 13, 1943

DEAR PETER SALMON,

THERE IS A DOUBLE PLEASURE FOR ME IN WRITING TO YOU. AS A CUP-BEARER OF HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR MY BLIND FELLOWS I COULD NOT HAVE HAD A MORE PRECIOUS RECOMPENSE THAN THE BEAUTIFUL, APPRECIATIVE SPIRIT BREATHED BY YOUR LAST LETTER. THE BROOKLYN INDUSTRIAL HOME ANNIVERSARY AND THE ARMY-NAVY "E" AWARD TOUCHED ME TO THE VERGE OF TEARS, SO GRATIFIED WAS I BY SUCH A CONFIRMATION OF THE FAITH THAT HAD LED ME THROUGH ALL THE UPS AND DOWNS OF ENDEAVOR TO MAKE GOOD THE PLACE OF THE BLIND IN THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF SERVICE AND SYMPATHY WHICH BINDS NORMAL SOCIETY TOGETHER.

ANOTHER CAUSE I HAVE FOR THANKFULNESS IS YOUR NOBLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE DEAF-BLIND. WHEN I CONSIDER ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR THE DOUBLY HANDICAPPED YOU COULD FIND ROOM FOR IN THE HOME, I AM CHEERED IN AN ATTEMPT WHICH HAS OFTEN SEEMED HOPELESS -- INTERESTING OTHERS WITH MEANS AND COMPASSION ENOUGH TO DO SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE FOR THE LONELIEST, MOST EASILY OVERLOOKED GROUP OF HUMAN BEINGS ON EARTH. DURING MORE THAN FORTY YEARS I HAVE SOUGHT WAYS TO SHARE WITH THEM THE BLESSINGS HEAPED UPON ME, I HAVE PRAYED, PLEADED FOR THEM, WELCOMED WHAT I THOUGHT WERE PROMISING EFFORTS IN THEIR BEHALF; AND NATURALLY I AM SHAMEFACED BECAUSE AS YET THEY HAVE NOT HAD AN EFFECTIVE CHAMPION IN AMERICA. SO YOU WILL SEE WHAT BALM

TO MY MANY DISAPPOINTMENTS THE PROSPECT IS OF YOUR AND MY GETTING TOGETHER AND TRYING TO DISCOVER A METHOD OF BREAKING DOWN THIS LAST, MOST CRUEL BARRIER IN THE RESCUE OF LIFE'S EXILES FROM FELLOWSHIP, USEFUL ACTIVITY AND JOY.

WITH WARMEST CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO EVERY ONE IN THE HOME AND TO MRS. SALMON AND YOURSELF IN WHICH POLLY JOINS, I AM,

CORDIALLY YOURS,

Helen Keller

Helen Keller's Impromptu Remarks In Brooklyn

MR. WILLS, PETER SALMON AND FRIENDS,

A HAPPIER SATISFACTION COULD NOT HAVE COME TO ME THAN SPENDING MY BIRTHDAY HERE AT THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND WHERE OTHERS HANDICAPPED LIKE MYSELF KNOW THE DIGNITY OF SELF-SUPPORT AND THE JOY OF USEFULNESS. SO MOVED AM I THAT I CAN HARDLY SPEAK AS I ATTEMPT TO THANK YOU FOR A WELCOME WHICH PROCLAIMS US AS ACCEPTABLE LINKS IN THE BENEFICENCE WHICH BINDS CIVILIZED SOCIETY TOGETHER. BUT IF I CANNOT UTTER MY THANKS, I CAN LOVE THIS GATHERING BECAUSE IT HAS THE INTIMACY AND FREEDOM OF A TRUE FAMILY CIRCLE.

THERE IS DRAMA, TOO, IN THE FLAGS SURROUNDING US. FOR THEY SYMBOLIZE THE WATCHFUL CARE THAT ENFOLDS THOSE WHO ALONE CANNOT SAFEGUARD THEIR OWN HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE EFFORT OF DEMOCRACY TO EQUALIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NORMAL AND THE DISABLED ALIKE. THIS SETTING IS ALTOGETHER FITTING AS WE STAND WITH OUR FACES TOWARDS THE DAWN OF WHAT I BELIEVE WILL PROVE INDEED A DELIVERANCE FOR THE DEAF-BLIND OF AMERICA.

DURING ALMOST A LIFETIME IT HAS BEEN THE DESIRE IN MY HEART TO FIND A FRIEND WITH MEANS AND SYMPATHIES BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE IN THE UNSHELTERED, UNCOMFORTED EX-ILES OF THE SILENT DARK, AND NOW HEAVEN SMILES UPON ME AS I WITNESS MY LONG PRAYER ANSWERED IN THE FOURTEEN DEAF-BLIND PEOPLE HERE WHO ARE LOVED, WHO WORK AND SING AT THEIR TASKS, THOUGH OUTWARDLY MUTE. INEXPRESSIBLY GRATIFIED, I REALIZE THAT IT HAS TAKEN BROOKLYN -- STRONG, PUSHING BROOKLYN "ROUGH-HEWN ON THE EDGES OF SOCIETY" TO LIFT TO THE LIGHT THE CAUSE OF THE LAST AND THE MOST TRAGICALLY ISOLATED AMONG

THE BLIND. MAY ITS LIBERATING INFLUENCE SPREAD FAR AND SWIFTLY UNTIL EVERY CORNER OF DOUBLE DARKNESS IS REACHED, AND OUR CONSCIENCES CAN BE CLEAR AS WE CALL UPON THE LORD WHO HIMSELF IS CALLED DEAF AND BLIND IN THE PROPHETS. WHEN VISION, WISE LEADERSHIP AND DEVOTION ON THE PART OF NORMAL BEINGS AND COURAGE IN THE DEAF-BLIND THEMSELVES MEET AS THEY DO HERE IN THE HOME, WE CAN ANTICIPATE A MASTERPIECE OF HUMAN LIVING AND COMRADESHIP.

ARCAN RIDGE
WESTPORT, CONN.

JANUARY 12TH, 1950

DEAR PETER:

THIS IS THE EARLIEST CHANCE I HAVE HAD TO EXCLAIM TO YOU WHAT AN ADORABLE THOUGHT IT WAS IN YOU AND MY DEAF-BLIND FRIENDS AT THE BROOKLYN HOME TO REMEMBER POLLY AND ME AGAIN THIS CHRISTMAS. PLEASE TELL THEM, IT IS THEIR FRIENDSHIP -- AND YOURS, TOO, FOR WHICH I THANK THEM MOST WARMLY -- A BEAM OF UNQUENCHABLE RADIANCE IN THE BLESSED DAY.

POLLY AND I ENJOYED THE NUTS, CANDIES -- AND PRESERVES, SHARING THEM WITH TAKEO AND KEO IWAHASHI WHO HAVE SPENT THE PAST THREE WEEK-ENDS IN OUR HOME WHICH WAS GAY WITH A FIR-TREE, WREATHS AROUND THE FIREPLACE AND THOSE PRECIOUS SOUVENIRS FROM JAPAN. IT WAS A SPECIAL JOY FOR US BECAUSE WE COULD HAVE TWO SUCH WONDERFUL FRIENDS FROM A FOREIGN LAND AS OUR CHRISTMAS GUESTS.

BY THE WAY, WHEN WE TELEPHONED TAKEO THE OTHER DAY, HE TOLD US HOW KIND YOU, PETER, HAD BEEN TO HIM, AND I WANT TO THANK YOU EVER SO MUCH. I HOPE YOU CAN DO SOMETHING WORTH WHILE HELPING HIM WITH THE BAMBOO MATS. I ADMIRE HIS FINE QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP STILL MORE AFTER READING THE LAW WHICH HE DRAFTED AND GOT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE JAPANESE DIET FOR THE PHYSICAL WELFARE AND EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS INCLUDING THE BLIND BEFORE HE CAME TO AMERICA, AND IT IS HIS DARING AMBITION ALSO TO REHABILITATE MILLIONS OF SIGHTLESS PEOPLE IN THE ORIENT WHERE THEY STILL EAT THE ASHES OF LIFE FOR BREAD, AND ARE UNBEFRIENDED.

IT WAS ANOTHER CHRISTMAS GLEAM -- YOUR SPLENDID NEWS ABOUT THE NEW HOLIDAY HOME FOR THE BLIND AND THE DEAF-BLIND AT LLOYD HARBOR. I CONGRATULATE YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATES ON SECURING SUCH A DELIGHTFUL ESTATE TO CONVERT INTO "ACRES OF HAPPINESS" FOR PEOPLE WHOSE PLEASURES ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN. IT WILL INDEED BE A PRECIOUS BOON IF YOU SUCCEED IN HAVING A CONVALESCENCE SECTION AND ANOTHER FOR THE BLIND WHO ARE ALSO CHRONICALLY ILL. AND THE BLIND FORTUNATE IN THEIR HEALTH WILL HAVE A WHOLESOME OUTLET WHEN YOU CAN ARRANGE FOR THEM TO SPEND TWO OR THREE WEEKS IN THE COUNTRY. JOY IS THE FLAME THAT KEEPS OUR PURPOSE WARM AND OUR INTELLIGENCE ALERT, AND WHAT PLEASANTER BENEFICENCE CAN THERE BE FOR DONORS THAN TO BESTOW UPON BLIND WORKERS A FEW DAYS OF FRESH AIR AND HOLIDAY SPORT?

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE DEAF-BLIND, AND THE INSPIRATION WHICH I KNOW THEY WILL GAIN FROM THE WORK FOR DEAF CHILDREN AT THE LEXINGTON SCHOOL, I AM, WITH WARM NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM US BOTH

AFFECTIONATELY YOUR FRIEND,

Helen Keller

SEPTEMBER 27, 1955

PETER SALMON, MR. ZIEGLER AND FRIENDS,

A MORE DELIGHTFUL OCCASION COULD NOT PRESENT ITSELF TO ME THAN TO FOREGATHER WITH YOU IN THIS SWEET RETREAT WHERE YOU ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAYS. THEN THERE IS THE HAPPY KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU DEDICATED THIS GARDEN TO ME WHERE YOU TAKE PLEASURE IN LOVELY FORMS AND VIBRATIONS THAT PENETRATE THE DARKNESS AND SILENCE. IT IS INDEED AN ADORABLE SPOT OF EARTH, A PATH TO JOYOUS RENEWAL OF LIFE'S ACTIVITIES. I TOO HAVE A SURE SIGN THAT GOD WALKS IN MY GARDEN. IN THE ABSENCE OF SIGHT MY TOUCH IS KEENER TO THE CHARM OF FLOWERS AND TREES, AND MY SMELL IS ALMOST A NEW FACULTY OF OBSERVATION. YES, THERE IS A LAW BY WHICH YOU CAN MAKE MANY EXCURSIONS INTO A BORDERLAND OF EXPERIENCE WHICH IS CLOSE TO THE CITY OF LIGHT.

Helen Keller

SEPTEMBER 27, 1955

VICE ADMIRAL ROYAR, PETER SALMON AND FRIENDS,

HUMBLY I THANK YOU, VICE-ADMIRAL ROYAR, FOR THE AWARD YOU HAVE SO GRACIOUSLY ACCORDED TO ME.

NOT ONLY AM I PLEASED TO RECEIVE THE AWARD, I AM EVEN MORE PROUD THAT THROUGH ME YOU EXPRESS YOUR APPROVAL AND THE WARM ENCOURAGEMENT OF MY COUNTRY TO THE 3200 BLIND AND DEAF-BLIND WORKERS IN ITS EMPLOYMENT. IT IS A PRECIOUS TRIUMPH WHICH FIFTY YEARS AGO I DID NOT EXPECT TO WITNESS A TANGIBLE AND VISIBLE PROOF THAT BOTH THE BLIND AND THOSE WITHOUT SIGHT AND HEARING CAN KEEP IN THE RACE OF LIFE DOING EXCELLENT WORK ACCORDING TO THE SAME GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS AS NORMAL WORKERS. I PRAY THAT THAT SPLENDID ENTERPRISE MAY BE PUSHED FURTHER, OPENING MORE WORKSHOPS FOR THE HANDICAPPED AND PLACING THE CAPABLE ONES IN OPEN INDUSTRY IN AMERICA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD. THEN INDEED SHALL WE LIFT UNTO GOD A GIFT MOST ACCEPTABLE IN HIS SIGHT -- BROKEN LIVES REPAIRED AND SOULS EXALTED IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY.

Helen Keller

ARCAN RIDGE
WESTPORT, CONN.

APRIL 3RD, 1959

MR. PETER J. SALMON
INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND
57 WILLOUGHBY STREET
BROOKLYN 1, NEW YORK

DEAR PETER SALMON:

WITH INEXPRESSIBLE GRATITUDE AND JOY I SEND MY GREETINGS TO YOU AND THE COMMITTEE ON SERVICES TO THE DEAF-BLIND OF THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND. POLLY THOMSON AND I ARE FULL OF REGRET THAT WE CANNOT BE WITH YOU AT A MEETING THAT IS A CAPITAL EVENT IN MY LIFE. BUT TRULY IT IS A DAY OF THANKSGIVING FOR ME WHEN DELIVERANCE BEGINS TO SMILE UPON HUMAN BEINGS EVERYWHERE WHOSE FATE IS SADDEST BECAUSE THEY CANNOT SPEAK OR HAVE A WORD SPOKEN TO THEM.

I HAVE READ WITH INTENSE INTEREST THE FOUR VOLUMES I RECEIVED FROM YOU ABOUT THE DEAF-BLIND. UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO I DID NOT EXPECT SUCH A GRATIFYING EXPERIENCE TO JUSTIFY MY OWN TRIPLE LIMITATIONS, BUT NOW YOU AND THE COMMITTEE MAKE ME FEEL THAT I HAVE NOT LIVED IN VAIN FOR A PURPOSE WOVEN IN THE DEEPEST CONCERNS OF SUFFERING HUMANITY.

THOSE FOUR BOOKS ARE INDEED A UNIQUELY MOVING RECORD, AND I WANT TO EMBRACE YOU ALL FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND UNFLAGGING ZEAL IN SERVING AS COMPARATIVELY FEW PEOPLE SURROUNDED BY A MULTITUDE OF CRUEL PROBLEMS.

ONE FACT ABOUT YOUR RECORD PLEASES ME ESPECIALLY. YOU NEVER LOST SIGHT OF A PRINCIPLE WHICH NORMAL PEOPLE SEEM UNABLE TO GRASP. NO TWO DEAF-BLIND PERSONS ARE ALIKE ANY MORE THAN TWO MEMBERS OF OTHER HANDICAPPED GROUPS. AT EVERY TURN YOU APPROACH THEM AS HUMAN BEINGS AND STRIVE TO SECURE THEIR RIGHTS TO USEFUL WORK AND TO THE PLEASANTNESS OF NORMAL LIVING. IT WILL NEVER BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO THANK YOU AND THE COMMITTEE ADEQUATELY FOR SUCH BEAUTIFUL KINDNESS TO MY FELLOWS WITH MULTIPLE HANDICAPS. I CAN ONLY BLESS YOU FERVENTLY AND WISH YOU WELL IN A WORK WHICH REQUIRES RARE UNDERSTANDING AND COURAGEOUS REACHING OUT TO GENEROUS CONDUCT AND HELPFUL FRIENDSHIP IN NORMAL PEOPLE WHO LEARN TO LIVE WITH THE DEAF-BLIND.

WITH AFFECTIONATE APPRECIATION, I AM

YOUR DEVOTED FRIEND,

Helen Keller

ARCAN RIDGE
WESTPORT, CONN.

JULY 8, 1960

MR. PETER J. SALMON
THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND
57 WILLOUGHBY STREET
BROOKLYN, 1, NEW YORK

DEAR PETER SALMON:

I CANNOT THANK YOU AND MY EIGHTY DEAF-BLIND FRIENDS IN WORDS BUT ONLY WITH MY LOVE-FLOODED HEART FOR MY BEAUTIFUL BIRTHDAY. THE BEAUTIFUL PLAQUE AND DELICIOUS BIRTHDAY CAKE MADE ME FEEL SIXTEEN AGAIN. IN FACT IT WAS MY HAPPIEST BIRTHDAY THAT I SPENT WITH YOU ALL IN BROOKLYN. IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN MY INTENSE DESIRE THAT THE BLESSINGS OF MY DELIVERANCE MIGHT SPREAD TO THOSE WHO CANNOT SEE OR HEAR, BUT I NEVER DREAMED THAT I SHOULD HAVE THE DELIGHTFUL FEELING OF SO MANY LIBERATED HANDS CLASPING MINE OR THEIR FRIENDSHIP POURED OUT IN AN AFFECTIONATE WELCOME. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE SORROW I HAD SO OFTEN ENDURED AT THE FAILURE TO BRIGHTEN MORE LIVES PLUNGED INTO DARKNESS AND SILENCE WAS SOFTENED, AND I BLESSED YOU, PETER, FOR YOUR EVER INCREASING CONTRIBUTION TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE DEAF-BLIND.

PLEASE GIVE MY AFFECTIONATE MESSAGES OF SPIRITUAL KINSHIP TO MY FELLOW-PRISONERS BEHIND THE BARS OF DOUBLE LIMITATION.

WITH WARMEST GRATITUDE, I AM,

CORDIALLY YOUR FRIEND,

Helen Keller

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K282 Salmon, Peter J.
Sa35 THE WORCESTER LAD FONDLY RE-
MEMBERS HELEN KELLER ON THE OCCASION
OF THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF [illegible]
BIRTH... Date Due (1980)

DR. PETER J. SALMON (THE WORCESTER LAD) HAS BEEN A STAFF MEMBER OF THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND FOR 63 YEARS, AS BUSINESS MANAGER, SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND PRESENTLY AS ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT. HE HAS TAKEN PART IN THE GROWTH OF THE IHB FROM A VERY SMALL AGENCY IN BROOKLYN DEALING ONLY WITH BLIND MEN, TO A MULTI-FUNCTIONING AGENCY, WHICH IS NOW ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST RESPECTED AGENCIES IN THE WORLD, WITH FACILITIES IN KINGS, QUEENS, NASSAU AND SUFFOLK COUNTIES OF NEW YORK. HE BELIEVES FIRMLY THAT FAITH AND HARD WORK HAVE BEEN THE TWO MAIN INGREDIENTS IN HIS WORK OVER THE YEARS, EVEN IN THE MOST DIFFICULT TIMES.

DR. SALMON IS FOUNDER AND ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE HELEN KELLER NATIONAL CENTER FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTHS AND ADULTS. THE CENTER REPRESENTS THE GREATEST CONCERN THAT HELEN KELLER HAD FOR A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE DEAF-BLIND. HE HELPS IN THE POLICY MAKING OF THE CENTER AND IS CHIEFLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF FUNDING BY THE REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

THE INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR THE BLIND
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Helen Keller

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